Having declared gun violence a public health crisis, America’s physicians have grown increasingly frustrated at the nation’s failure to make progress in preventing gun-related deaths and injuries. Already this year, more than 30,000 have died of gun violence in the U.S.

At the 2022 AMA Interim Meeting in Honolulu, the House of Delegates took action to explore new avenues to address this public health crisis.

“Six years ago, just before the AMA Annual Meeting, a shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando prompted physician and medical student delegates to declare firearm violence a public health crisis in the United States,” said AMA President Jack Resneck Jr., MD. “Today we gather in the wake of another tragic shooting—this one on the campus of the University of Virginia—that left young people dead and a campus on lockdown.

“We cannot continue to live this way,” said Dr. Resneck, a dermatologist. “Our children spend portions of school days running active-shooter drills, knowing full well their classroom could be next. In movie theaters, houses of worship, hospitals, big cities and small towns, firearm violence has shattered any sense of security and taken lives. As physicians and healers, we are committed to ending firearm violence by advocating for common-sense, evidence-based solutions, and this task force will be key to that ongoing effort.”

Building on more than 30 policy recommendations adopted over the past two decades to reduce firearm trauma, injury and death, delegates adopted language put forth by the AMA Medical Student Section and the American Academy of Pediatrics that directed the AMA to:

- Establish a task force to focus on gun-violence prevention, including gun-involved suicide.
- Support and consider providing grants to evidence-based firearm violence-interruption programs in communities, schools, hospitals and clinics.
- Collaborate with interested state and specialty societies to increase engagement in litigation related to firearm safety.
- Report annually to the House of Delegates on AMA efforts relating to legislation, regulation and litigation at the federal, state and local levels to prevent gun violence.

Find out why the America’s physicians say “enough is enough” on gun violence.

Delegates also adopted new policy to “make readily accessible on the AMA website the comprehensive summary of AMA policies, plans, current activities and progress regarding the public health crisis of firearm violence.”

Read about the other highlights from the 2022 AMA Interim Meeting.

URL: https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/public-health/preventing-deadly-gun-violence-will-be-focus-ama-task-force

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